Vol. VII. Numb. 21

THE OBSERVATOR.

Farther Advices to our Electors against next Parliament. The Laws which secure our Freedom of Choice. What we mean by modern Whigs; and how unfit they are to be chosen, or direct us in our Choice. And that we ought to chuse none, but those, who are true to her Majesty's Government, the Hannover *Succession, and the fundamental Liberties of our Country.*

From Saturday, April 24. to Wednesday, April 28. 1708.

Country-m. I Want some more of your Advice to our Electors of Parliament-men, Master.

Obs. They have so many Advices, *Roger*, already, that I am afraid they will be surfeited with them; and perhaps some of them may so turn their Stomachs, that they will be able to digest none at all. However, *Roger*, I will do what I think to be my Duty; and knowing, that my Country-men, whose Appetites are not deprav'd, love good substantial Food, and are no Admirers of *French* Kick-shaws, dress'd up either with old Tory, or modern Whig Sauce, I will present 'em with a good old *English* Dish, cook'd up after the Fashion of *Magna Charta*; which, tho' it may prove uneasy to squeamish Stomachs, that can digest nothing but what relishes strong of Court or Party, I am sure will sit very easy upon the Stomachs of those, who are of a sound Constitution; and if People would be but perswaded to make Use of it, they would find it to be the only sovereign Remedy to cure the Nation, which has been afflicted a long Time with the *French* Distemper, tho' under several Denominations, but all of them intermix'd with the Scurvy.

Country-m. Pray let's have it, Master; for we are in a languishing Condition, and want a Restorative.

Obs. With all my Heart, *Roger*. Our Ancestors knowing well enough, that tho' the true Interest of King and Country is always really the same, yet most Courtiers were for making a separate Interest of their own; they procur'd the Statute of 3 *Ed.* 1. Cap. 5. that there should be no Disturbance of free Elections; which runs thus: *And because Elections ought to be free, the King commandeth, upon great Forfeiture, that no Man by Force of Arms, nor by Malice or Menacing, shall disturb any to make free Election.*

Country-m. Then, Master, our Friends at *Rygate*, and elsewhere, have plain enough Directions what to do, in Case they be threaten'd by any Person.

Obs. You say very well, *Roger*. Nor was it in one Reign only, that the Freedom of Elections was provided for; Courtiers, and other Great Men, had always an Itch to have the Power of Elections, as much as might be in their own Hands. Therefore, by 7 *Hen.* 4. Cap. 15. the Manner of electing Knights of Shires is laid down; and it is enacted, *That in the full County*, i. e. *meeting of the Free-holders, the People shall proceed to the Election freely and indifferently, notwithstanding any Request or Commandment to the contrary.*

Country-m. By this, Master, it is plain, that our Electors ought to have no more Regard to the Requests or Threats of a Courtier, than to those of a Cobler; and they shew themselves to be degenerate from their brave Ancestors, if they act otherwise.

Obs. The Freedom of Elections is provided for, *Roger*, in the very same Words, by 11 *Hen.* 4. Cap. 1. and by 6 *Hen.* 6. Cap. 4. By all which, 'tis plain, *Roger*, as our honest old Revolution-Whigs laid it down in the Account of their Reasons for inviting over the Prince of *Orange*, pag. 3. 'That there ought 'to be no Commands, Promises, or Threats; no Prayers, nor Sollicitations, by the King, or any other; the 'Peoples Deputies (say the Laws) are to be chosen 'freely, and indifferently, without Pre-ingagement 'of the Electors, or Fear of displeasing the King, 'and without Promises of Favour or Rewards to 'them. They are to be indifferent at the Time and 'Place of Election; and in such Manner to pro-'ceed, notwithstanding any Request or Command 'to the contrary; otherwise the Elections are void 'and null. We are not able to number the vari-'ous Kinds of Attempts and Practices to over-turn 'this Foundation of our Government - - -. But 'there are continual Attempts upon the personal 'Freedom and Indifferency of all the Electors for 'Parliament-men throughout the Kingdom - - -. 'There have been infinite Endeavours and Artifices 'openly us'd to destroy the Customs, Priviledges, 'Charters, and Governments of all the Cities and 'Burroughs, by whom four parts in five of the 'Members of the Commons in Parliament, are to 'be chosen, and to bring all those Bodies politick; 'and all their Magistrates and Officers to be depen-'dant on the King's Will, and to be oblig'd, as his 'Creatures, to serve his popish and arbitrary De-'signs, or to be turn'd out of their Places at his 'Pleasure.

Country-m. Ah! Master, how much have too many of those who call themselves Whigs, gone off from those honest Principles, and yet they are very angry with us for saying they are Whigs of a modern Stamp, and are guilty of the same Practices for which they justly accus'd the Tories.

Obs. The Tree is best known by its Fruit, *Roger*; therefore our Electors ought to judge of Men by their Actions, and not by their Pretensions; for if any Man be known to promote an Interest in Courtiers, distinct from that of the Country, and endeavours to have such Men chosen as have a Dependance upon Courtiers, by Places, Commissions, or Pensions, for themselves or Relations, he may call himself a Whig as long as he pleases, but so far he acts the Part of a real Tory.

Country-m. But you know, Master, they have a plausible Excuse for doing so, and inculcate every where, that they must chuse Men who they know will support the Government.

Obs. That's a meer Cobweb-Pretence, *Roger*, and is the old Dog new dy'd, (the Tory Maxim in the Mouth of modern Whigs;) for he must have a very unjust and uncharitable Opinion of his Fellow-Subjects, if he thinks there are none in the Kingdom, who will support the Government, but such as have a Dependance of this Nature upon Courtiers, and Men in great Posts, Civil or Military. Instead of Whigism, this is downright poysonous Torism, and diametrically opposite to the Principles of the Revolution; as is evident from the Prince of *Orange*'s additional Declaration, by which he promis'd to do all that was possible *to secure the Nation from relapsing into the Miseries of arbitrary Government*: And this he did in Compliance with the Memorial presented to him by the *English* Protestants, who invited him over, wherein they loudly complain'd, among other Things, of the Arts and Tricks the Courtiers made use of to influence Elections, so as to have the Majority of the Parliament at their Direction; which they justly call *a plain Proof*, pag. 4. *that the Ax was laid to the Root of our Civil Government.*

Country-m.

Country-m. But our modern Whigs ſay, Maſter, that there's a Difference betwixt a good and bad Government; and that we are to allow more to a good, than to a bad Prince.

Obſ. That's a fooliſh Diſtinction, *Roger*, and the meer Effect of a ſneaking temporizing Humour promoted among our modern Whigs, by Men, who would engroſs the whole Adminiſtration into their own Hands, and do all that they can to make every Prince their own Property. Whereas, in Truth, the Government is the Conſtitution, of which we ought not ſo much as to part with a Hoof, in Complaiſance to thé beſt of Princes, were they as good as *David*, or as wiſe as *Solomon*. Nor can any ſuch Language as that proceed from the Prince, who ſpeaks or demands nothing but according to Law; but is the Language of *Paraſites*, who call their own ſeparate Intereſt, that of the Prince: For 'tis plain from the Reaſon of the Thing, as well as from our Statutes, and woful Experience, that to have ſuch a Parliament, as the Majority of 'em may be at the Devotion of a Court, is the ſame Thing as to be govern'd for the Time, without a Parliament at all; and that whatever we allow a good Prince, a bad One will claim as his Due; nor was there ever any Prince ſo bad in the World, no, not *Nero* or *Domitian*, but they were always extoll'd as the beſt by their Courtiers; and whatever People might think, it was never ſafe for them to ſay the contrary.

Country-m. That's very true, Maſter; there's never a Tory or modern Whig of 'em all, that will lend a Sum of Money to an honeſt Man, but they will take as good Security from him, and tie him up as ſtrict to the Performance of Covenants, as if he were an errant Knave: And thus our wiſe Anceſtors bound up our good, as well as our bad Princes, *by the ſame original Contract, or Coronation-Oath, by which they oblig'd them to govern according to the Laws which the People choſe.*

Obſ. That's very true, *Roger*; yet, at the ſame Time, you and I are as much or more for chuſing Men of true Revolution-Principles, as any modern Whig of them all; for we can never be ſafe in other Hands: Nor can we expect, that Men of oppoſite Sentiments, will be for ſupporting her Majeſty's Title and Government in good Earneſt, or for enabling her to carry on the War with ſuch Vigor, as may conclude in an honourable Peace; by which the *Hannover* Succeſſion may be effectually ſecur'd; the Ballance of *Europe* reſtor'd; and our Differences in Matters of Religion, compromis'd, ſo as to take it out of the Power of one Party of Proteſtants, to continue or impoſe Marks of Baſtardy and Infamy upon another, by Sacramental Teſts, and Occaſional Bills. But that our modern Whigs are not the Men proper to accompliſh thoſe great and glorious Ends, I think, *Roger*, is evident, 1. From Sir *John Fenwick*'s laſt Papers, wherein, if he ſpoke true, ſome Great Ones of that Stamp, were bargaining with the Court of *St. Germains*, in the Reign of King *William*, of glorious Memory. 2. From their falling in with the Treaty of *Partition*, by which they diſpos'd of the Dominions of *Spain*, without the Conſent of the *Spaniards*, which is directly contrary to the Principles of the Revolution, and old Whigs; and has entail'd upon us a conſumptive War, by provoking the *Spaniards* to ſurrender all their Dominions into the Hands of *France*. 3. From their agreeing to the diſhonourable Treaty of *Ryſwick*, which came ſo far ſhort of our Declaration of War, without any Security for the Succeſſion of her preſent Majeſty, and her Heirs; or in Caſe ſhe had none, of the Proteſtant Line. 4. From their taking no Care to ſecure the Toleration, by an expreſs Act in the late Treaty of Union; by which 'twould ſeem, they deſign'd to keep the Diſſenters at their Beck, that they might vote on all Occaſions as they would have them, for Fear of having the penal Laws of the State, and the Artillery of the Church, by their *ipſo Facto* Excommunications, let looſe upon them, as in the Days of *Yore*. For they know very well, *Roger*, that were the Diſſenters entirely manumited from the Yoke of Slavery, which is ſtill hanging over their Necks, (if ever an arbitrary Prince aſcend the Throne, or *bene Placito* High-Church Judges get upon the Bench) the Diſſenters would vote at all Elections according to their Conſciences, without any Fear of diſobliging the one or the other Party, and would be for chuſing ſuch Men as are ſtaunch to the Intereſt of their Country, and not ſuch as are for palliating Grievances complain'd of in the Addreſſes of both Houſes, or are for giving Thanks to thoſe, whom the Lords and Commons have branded with Negligence, or ſuch ill Management, as is deſtructive of our Trade and Security. Nor would they, in ſuch a Caſe, vote for any Man, who did not do Juſtice to our Merchants in managing their Complaints, or inſtead of cultivating the Union, made ſuch Speeches, and took ſuch other Meaſures, as tended to exaſperate the *Scots*, by denying them what is expreſly ſtipulated by the Articles of Union.

Country-m. I am perfectly of your Mind, Maſter; and am very well ſatisfy'd, that the Body of the Whigs in *Great Britain*, are honeſt Men, true to her Majeſty and the Government; tho' ſome, who aſſume that Name, and by thoſe only we underſtand what we call modern Whigs, ill deſerve the Title; for by their whole Conduct, they have made it appear, that their only View is their own Intereſt, without any Regard to that of the Queen or Country, except it be to accompliſh their own Ends.

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